

Surprising Lady "Connie" Richardson Startles Nobility Once More

Very Interesting Romance and Wedding That Have Set All England Buzzing Just When Everybody Was Thinking That She Had Already Done Everything Possible to Amaze Them

LONDON, Aug. 30.

THE surprising Lady Constance Stewart Richardson, who has so often startled staid old London that some British dowagers hold up their hands in horror at the very mention of her name, and about whom some gallant English wag once said that she was to the British nobility what an extra strong cocktail is to a banquet, has achieved another climax in her vivacious career as a "shocker."

Those who thought this effervescent noblewoman, who has so often declared she'd rather have her legs taper beautifully than have her head decorated with a queen's crown, had exhausted her bag of tricks, have just come to realize they were wrong.

This conclusion has been reached because of her recent marriage and the extraordinary happenings which celebrated it.

Little more than a dozen years ago Lady Constance electrified society by announcing she had come to the conclusion clothes do not make the woman, and that woman would be far better off if she would discard mere raiment. Of course, she said then, women nowadays have atrocious figures, caused by corsets and neglect. Consequently, she said, every woman should learn to dance, and—certainly, dance with as few clothes on as the law would allow.

There followed a veritable panorama of shocks—that reverberated, some of them, around the world and reached their climaxes in this country.

But her beloved husband died a year or two ago and Lady Connie properly went into mourning—pretty mourning, of course, for everything about Lady Connie was pretty, as every one admitted. People thought she would remain subdued.

But—picture this!

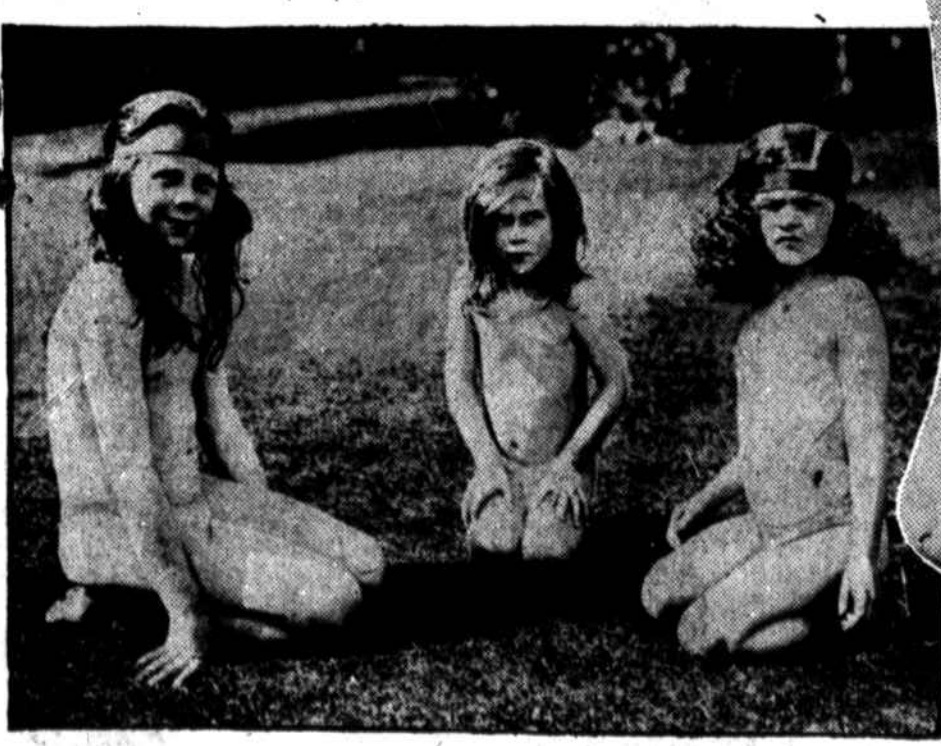
A dark, sombre, hallowed auditorium in one of the oldest churches in England, in the very shadow of the great Westminster.



Lady Connie in the Cowboy Costume in Which She Loves to Ride Over Her Estates.

Out before the altar comes Bishop Lever, one of the most pompous and imposing of British prelates.

Down the auditorium the aisle separates two compact groups of the



Lady Connie's Three Little Children, Who Were Never Allowed to Wear Clothes Anywhere or Anytime, Much to the Embarrassment of Her Friends on Certain Occasions.

nobility—among them the Sutherlands, the Cromarties, the Montmorencys, the Devonshires, Rutlands and the Newcastles—all ducal families with which Lady Connie was or was about to become related.

The grande dames and the honorable misses, and the dukes and viscounts in the audience, stand with their faces properly turned to the altar, but surreptitious glances are turned back to the church door whence will come the bride-to-be and her newest bridegroom.

"How will Lady Connie look?" "How will she behave?" "What a delight it will be to see her, this once anyway, in the conventional habiliments of a sober-minded, demure and proper ladyship!" Such are the thoughts that are in those noble heads.

The door is opened by the ushers. There is a rustle—and then a gasp.

The bride and bridegroom are approaching the altar. And just look at Lady Connie! Whatever she has done in the past is outdone now.

Has she come to be married in the conventional white—a dainty touch of color in her gown to signify that this is not her first experience with "honor and obey"? Heavens, no! That would not be Lady Connie—every one now realizes.

Instead of flowers, two great bunches of grapes are in her hands. Grapes—the badge of Bacchus and the symbol of fruition! She can mean but one thing—that she wants the world to know that this occasion is to usher in a riotous, intoxicating love life, with abandon leavened by maternity.

What an amazing determination to flaunt in the faces of these peers and peeresses of the realm—and into the very teeth of the imposing Bishop!

But that is not all! Draped over her head, flowing with a rakish sweep to the floor, is—a bridal veil?—ah, no! A peacock scarf—to testify mutely that this bride walks with no humility, but struts instead, with no shyness before the coming ritual, but with defiant pride in her submission to the programme those grapes signify.

The bride's wrap, of course, should be a soft-toned gray—as, after all, she is a widow as well as a bride. But not so for Lady Connie! Hers is a vivid sage green—a shimmering, startling green. As its modish folds flare back there peeps out a lemon yellow lining—green that calls to mind the Springtime lawns upon the heights of Olympus, where Venus gambled with Adonis; yellow that invoked the apple that brought grief to Eve, but glory to Aphrodite! And out of the coat drooped violet sleeves—the color of Cupid's



Lady Connie Richardson Revealing in Her Dance a Great Deal of Her Noble Self.

darling! How atrocious, said some, to flaunt such colorful reminders at one's wedding! How roguish, said others.

Her gown—demure and bridelike white?—no; a rich sand-colored velvet, not caught with the traditional pearl, but with a brilliant sapphire clasp.

And now, the greatest shock of all.

What in the world can be that flash of pink-toned brown almost half way up the bridal skirt from the edge of the sand-colored sandals?

A dowager clutched at her smelling salts. For a second glance left no doubt. Lady Connie's bridal skirt was open on one side from the lower hem to a place above the knee, and Lady Connie's leg, sheathed in silken, transparent, quail brown stockings, was plainly visible, even above the shapely knee which so disturbed Sir William Robertson, then chief of staff at the front, that he taboored further dancing by its owner before wounded British soldiers in the hospitals in France.

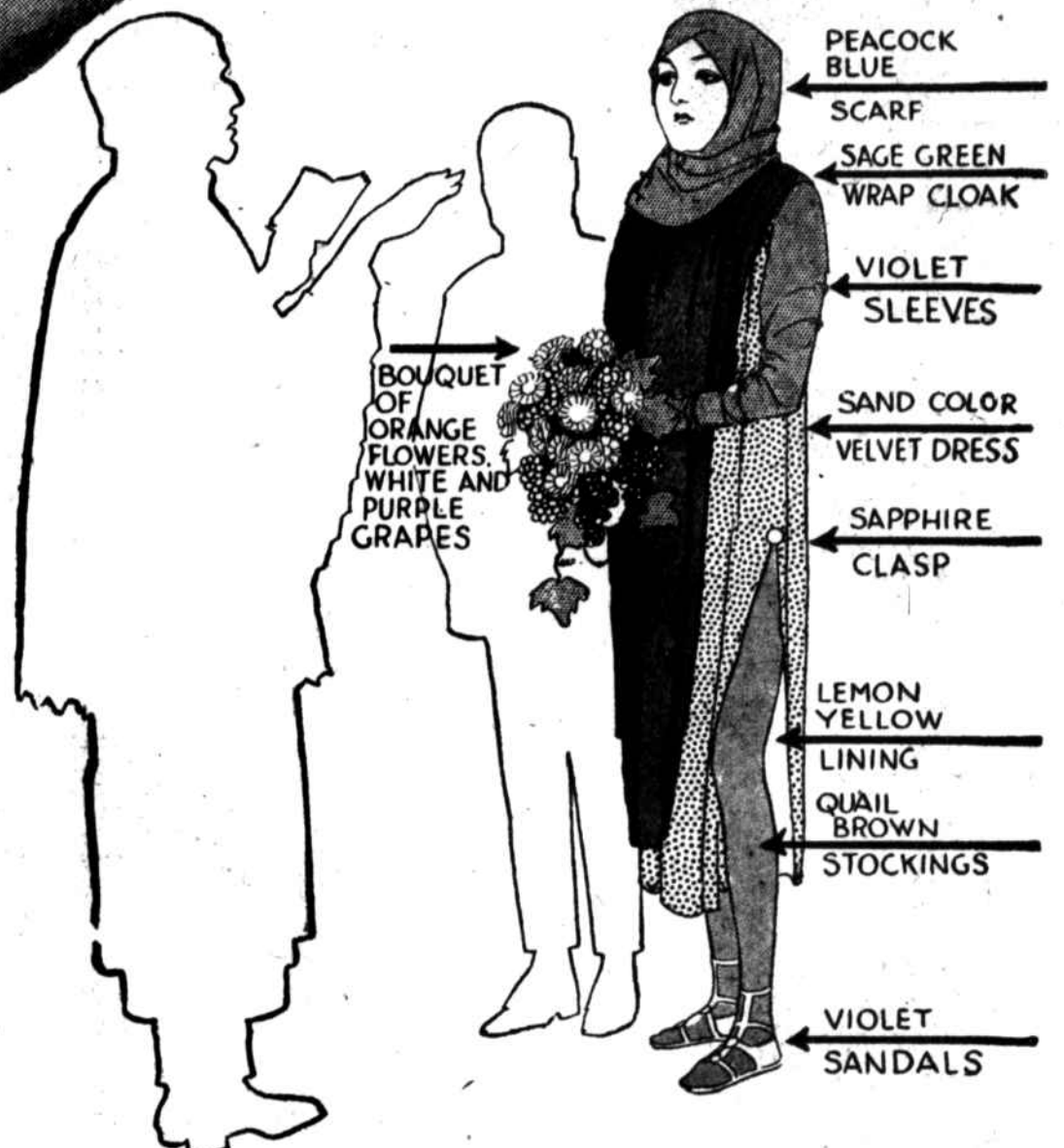
Was there ever such a wedding costume, such a bride?

When the ceremony was concluded the Bishop formally bestowed his good wishes upon the bride and bridegroom and turned with stately dignity to leave the chancel.

The audience was too stupefied to move when the bride and groom turned about and again walked down the aisle to the car waiting outside to whirl them away to a honeymoon at the groom's country castle.

The new husband of Lady Connie is Sir

"Lady Connie's bridal skirt was open on one side from the lower hem to a place just at her knee, and Lady Connie's leg, sheathed in silken, transparent, quail brown stockings, was plainly visible, even above the shapely knee."



Pictorial Diagram Showing the Color Harmonies in the Brand New Kind of Wedding Dress Lady Connie Designed.

Denis Lockie Matthew, of Whitehall Court, a distant relative of the Duke of Newcastle, possessor of a town house, a country estate and a shooting box in Scotland. He is very wealthy and, as colonel of a regiment of Scotch engineers, won undying glory in the war. He was an intimate friend of Sir Edwin, his bride's first husband.

Everyone is wondering what will be Sir Dennis's attitude toward Lady Connie's eccentric ideas of bringing up her three little sons by her former marriage. Certainly this will be a very grave problem for him. What would he have done, for example, had he been Lady Connie's husband when she gave that sterner reception to Lieutenant-Colonel Repington, the famous diarist of the war, upon the occasion of one of the Colonel's visits to the neighborhood of the Richardson county estate.

After a rather stereotyped afternoon, and when many of the guests were beginning to say their adieux, Lady Connie interested them all by exclaiming to Colonel Repington and Mrs. Repington:

"I am sure you will like to see my children—my three little boys. They would be quite distressed, too, if they did not have a chance to make their respects to such a hero. I will send for them."

Imagine the scene when these three children—all boys, ranging from four years of age to nine, entered the room. Around the forehead of each one of them was a narrow band, Greek fashion, which held their long hair. And this Greek band was every bit of clothing the three little boys wore. Otherwise they were quite as if they just had stepped from their bath.

It was all a matter of course to Lady Connie. She did not even remark upon the amazing appearance of her boys. When she had duly presented them she sent them away as unconcerned as if it were perfectly natural for three boys to walk unclothed into a drawing room filled with their mother's guests!

All England talked about this incident for months. What will Sir Dennis have to say about it if his wife continues to insist that her children be raised without clothing and presented to his guests in such fashion?

Will Lady Connie defy Sir Dennis if he attempts to exercise the British husband's authority over his wife to the end that she shall be more circumspect? Or will she have to submit to that authority—that husband's authority—which, in extreme cases, according to an old British law still in effect, may be maintained even to the use, on the wife, of a "birch stick provided it shall not exceed in thickness the husband's thumb?"



Lady Connie in Obviously Proper Dress.